

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration in view of the previous amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 are pending. Claims 1 and 18 are independent.

The Office Action objects to the specification. The specification is amended to address the Examiner's concerns.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,701,232 to Yamaki. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants' independent claim 1 recites, in combination with other claimed features, a process control system comprising measurement devices and actuators. All the measurement devices and actuators contain means for information processing and for data interchange between the measurement devices and actuators. All the measurement devices and actuators are connected by means for bidirectional data interchange.

Such features encompass Applicants' exemplary embodiment as illustrated in Fig. 1 wherein sensors 2a, 2b and 2c and actuator 3 each include the processor 1 and an interface 5. Each are connected via bidirectional data interchange 4d.

As disclosed in Fig. 5 and described in the paragraph beginning at line 18 of column 9, the Yamaki patent discloses that the various sensors are connected to the ECU 70 through the AD converter 80 and I/O interface 77. The CPU 71 contained in the ECU 70 executes the control program stored in the ROM 72 to process detection signals from the various sensors and switches. See the Yamaki patent at the paragraph beginning at line 39 of column 9. In addition, Fig. 6 is a flow chart for the actuator functional diagnosis. The ECU checks in step S10 whether a diagnosis

running condition is satisfied. If the diagnosis running condition is not satisfied, the ECU exits the routine at once, and if the diagnosis running condition is satisfied, it proceeds to S11 for executing the diagnosis.

These portions of the Yamaki patent show that the sensors and actuators do not contain means for information processing and for bidirectional data interchange. The portion of the Yamaki patent cited by the Examiner as disclosing bidirectional data interchange (col. 4, lines 55-65) does not relate to the sensors and actuators. Instead, this portion of the Yamaki patent discloses that a user may contact information control center 151 by using for example a cellular phone or a personal PC. See also column 5, the paragraph beginning at line 47 of the Yamaki patent. Therefore, the Yamaki patent does not disclose measurement devices and actuators contain means for information processing and for data interchange between the measurement devices and actuators, and for all the measurement devices and actuators being connected by means for bidirectional data interchange, as in Applicants' claim 1. Thus, claim 1 is distinguishable over the Yamaki patent.

Independent claim 18 is allowable for reasons similar to those discussed above with respect to independent claim 1.

The dependent claims are allowable for at least the reasons discussed above as well as for the individual features they recite.

Early and favorable action with respect to this application is respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise in connection with the application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful

in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC

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By: _____



Michael Britton
Registration No. 47,260

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, VA 22313-1404
703 836 6620